

SENATE BILL 2539

By Niceley

AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 5; Title 6; Title 7; Title 39, Chapter 14, Part 2; Title 44; Title 63, Chapter 12 and Title 68, Chapter 8, relative to rabies.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 68-8-103(a), is amended by deleting the word "It" from the beginning of the subsection and substituting the language "Subject to the exception in subsection (j), it", and by adding the following language as a new subsection (j):

(j) A person may own, keep, or harbor any dog six (6) months of age or older that has not been vaccinated against rabies, if a veterinarian licensed under title 63, chapter 12, part 1, has examined the dog and, based on the veterinarian's professional judgment, has certified in writing that at the time, vaccination would endanger the dog's health because of a medical consideration. A titer test may be administered to assist in determining the need for the vaccination. The owner of the dog is responsible for keeping a valid rabies vaccination exemption certificate in the owner's possession for inspection by an animal control officer, the department of agriculture, or the department of health. A rabies vaccination exemption certificate is valid for one (1) year from the date of the issuance of the rabies vaccination exemption certificate, after which time the dog must be re-examined by a licensed veterinarian and vaccinated against rabies or a new rabies vaccination exemption certificate must be issued to the animal's owner.

SECTION 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2020, the public welfare requiring it.